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BOOK REVIEWS

A NEW DICTIONARY OF RELIGION AND ETHICS

A new reference book for students of religion has recently appeared.¹ It was prepared for the average pastor and thoughtful layman and not for the specialist in any field. A large number of the articles are brief definitions or explanations of significant terms in theology, church history, and comparative religions. It is at the same time, however, an encyclopedia, covering a wide and interesting field in a series of valuable articles. Here, for example, is the field of comparative religions, of primitive religions and the various faiths and cults, past and present. Articles like that on "Bahaiism" by Sprengling, "Mystery Religions" by Case, "Faith Healing" by Kantor, and "Millenarianism" by Cross, suggest the attention to recent problems that are of wider interest. Only a thorough mastery of the materials enables a writer to bring so much into so brief compass and to set forth what is given in such clear and readable fashion as here.

In the philosophy and psychology of religion typical articles are those by Lyman on "Philosophy of Religion," by Pratt on "Psychology of Religion," "by Mathews on "Religion," and Watson on "Religious Experience." Here as elsewhere the promise of articles written "objectively, without speculation or propaganda," is carried out. Articles on Democracy, Liberty, Social Gospel, Social Service of the Church, Labor Movement, Family, Divorce, and Amusements suggest the interest in ethics and especially social ethics. Specific treatment from the Christian standpoint of such pressing ethical problems as those of property, the nature and authority of the state, and the principles governing international relations might be added here to advantage.

With the growing attention to matters of doctrine, no part of this dictionary will be of more interest than the articles dealing with these subjects. Those by Gerald Birney Smith, the chief contributor in this department, deserve special mention. In orderly arrangement and clear statement they are admirably adapted to the general reader. Their compact form makes possible the inclusion of all important materials. Their tone is objective and the statement of the various

¹ *A Dictionary of Religion and Ethics.* Edited by Shailer Mathews and Gerald Birney Smith. New York: Macmillan Co., 1921. vii+513 pages. \$8.00.

positions is eminently fair. The articles on God, Christology, Supernatural, Miracles, and Salvation are instances in point. The contributions of Mathews, Beckwith, Cross, and others are of the same kind (note especially Mathews' comprehensive article on Christianity). The dictionary offers valuable help to the man who wishes to know what sound modern scholarship is saying and to have at the same time a fair statement of the traditional views.

Would not the average reader appreciate a fuller statement of these matters and readily spare a large number of the smaller articles to which a few lines of formal definition or description are devoted? Take, for example, Asura, Ásvins, Atar, Atargatis, Atavism, Atharvaveda, Atman, Autocephali, Avarice, Avignon, Athos, Atrophy, Austerities. Some of these are of interest only to the specialist, and the meaning of others could be taken from easily available books of reference.

A hasty survey reveals a few of those errors which elude even the careful. The Methodist Episcopal, not the Episcopal church, established its missions in Japan in 1873. "Apocrypha" appears as "Apochrypha" not once but throughout the article on that subject.

A final question concerns the article on Christian Science which has been furnished by the Christian Science Board of Directors. Presumably the editors followed here the principle suggested in their prospectus, to have articles written "as far as possible by those most in sympathy with their subject." In so doing, however, have they not violated their other and primary principle, to have articles that are "written historically, objectively, without speculation or propaganda"? Do the principles of Christian Science permit a scientific and historical discussion by its adherents? The special student will be interested in reading this article, but will it give the average reader the reliable account which he has the right to expect in such a work, and the answer to important questions? For example, what is the position of Christian Science as to the personality of God? Does unreal mean what is not or what ought not to be? What about the origin of the movement, and Mrs. Eddy's relation to Quimby and other influences? We are not helped here by the repetition of orthodox historical misstatements or of Mrs. Eddy's ambiguous phrases. It is to be regretted that the editors in regard to this article followed the precedent of the *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*. It should be added that the bibliography in the Appendix gives some corrective by reference to other works, as Hastings does not.

This bibliography deserves a special word of appreciation. Here are given, under the heads of the principal subjects discussed, brief lists of

the most important references. No question is more often raised than that of the best books on a given subject. These lists have been carefully prepared. They are not so long as to confuse, and they should be of great aid to the student.

In the fields of theology, ethics, comparative religions, psychology and philosophy of religion, missions and church history, this dictionary gives authoritative information in compact and yet readable form. It will be of interest to the special student, and of large value to the pastor and the increasing number of laymen who are inquiring as to these subjects.

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A NOTABLE ROMAN CATHOLIC VERSION OF THE
NEW TESTAMENT*

Everyone must heartily welcome a new English version of the Bible under Roman Catholic auspices. Surely no one can use the antiquated and defective Douay version, even in such revisions as Challoner's or Kenrick's, with satisfaction. The Protestant world may join with all Catholics in the gratification which this admirable work must bring. We may expect to see the other three New Testament volumes shortly, and the Old Testament will follow as soon as may be. The names of the general editors are a guaranty of adequate scholarship, and it is good to be assured that the enterprise has "the approval of the English hierarchy and the co-operation of many distinguished Scripture Scholars in England, Ireland and America." Without this, indeed, the work could not have seen the light, but the plain statement of it is pleasant.

The present volume sets a high standard for its successors. The contributors include, besides the general editors, Fr. Rickaby, Fr. Keogh, and Archbishop Goodier, all English Jesuits. The work is first and foremost a translation. There are brief introductions to the several epistles, and four brief appendixes on special points, in addition to footnotes on each page. But these serve primarily to clarify or justify the translation. They reveal competent scholarship of the modern type, scholarship positive, constructive, reverent. It is, of course, scholarship within bounds. Thus we read that the primitive church in Thessalonica "was one in faith and government, bound to the other

* *The Westminster Version of the Sacred Scriptures.* General Editors: The Rev. Cuthbert Lattey, S.J., and the Rev. Joseph Keating, S.J. The New Testament, Vol. III: St. Paul's Epistles to the Churches. London and New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1921. lxiii + 258 pages. \$2.50.